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ness of M. Sismondi's pencil, compared with that of the anonymous author of the fine work in question. The philosopher Eudoxus is a Xerophrastus, but of far less choice absurdity. The fine topic of the conflict between christianity and paganism, is turned to little advantage by M. Sismondi; though the blind veneration professed by Clovis for religion of any and every kind, is well conceived and in true barbarian character. In recalling to recollection the personages introduced, we cannot fix upon one striking *eharacter*. Since the merit of the work, as a romance, is so inconsiderable, it needs scarce be added that, as an antiquarian essay, it is rather injured, than profited by the novel form. It is in vain to attempt so far to unite opposite branches of literature, that in the combination the essential features of either are sacrificed. A novel, which as a novel is ordinary, can recommend nothing else, however excellent it may be. An ignorance of this principle, is one of the causes of the dulness of Barthlemi's Anacharsis. No person of taste could endure for a moment the plot and story of Anacharsis standing by themselves, and with what reason is it to be expected that the antiquarian and historical details, which carry their own interest to persons engaged in their study, can gain new charms from that which is in itself common-place and insignificant, and which standing alone would not detain the attention a moment.

ART. IX.—*Europe : or a general survey of the present situation of the principal powers ; with conjectures on their future prospects ; by a Citizen of the United States.* London and Boston, 8vo. pp. 451. 1822.

MUCH as has been written on the political revolution, which broke out at the close of the last century in Europe, nothing is more uncommon than rational and distinct ideas in relation to its character and influence. One reason undoubtedly is, that, at no very distant period, all classes of society felt a personal interest in the contest. Great and unexpected changes succeeded each other so rapidly, that none could deem themselves beyond their reach. There were none, whose character and condition placed them above the tumult, and enabled them to look down on it with a calm and philosophic

eye. The whole fabric of society was shaken, the most ancient institutions were tottering from the foundation, and all men were engaged in attempting to uphold or to subvert them. This intense struggle has gone by, and the passions excited by it have in a great degree subsided ; but it was of a nature not lightly to be forgotten ; and those, who were witnesses and partakers of it, cannot recur to it, even now, without feelings ill adapted to a just and dispassionate judgment of its nature and tendency. Another reason is, that this revolution is still powerfully, though not tumultuously operating, so that its result is not yet ascertained, and a knowledge of the event is a very convenient guide in all our speculations, and particularly in those on political subjects, in which it seems to be considered an especial duty to play the prophet. It belongs to another generation to write the history of that eventful period. To many generations it must be a subject full of interest ; though it depends on its future consequences whether it be deemed hereafter so important an epoch in the annals of mankind, as it is now commonly supposed. Those who trembled and those who exulted at it, have alike been deceived in their expectation of its immediate effects. Terrible as was the convulsion, which then shook the whole continent, it has not proved, as many dreaded, a presage of the speedy dissolution of society ; nor as others hoped, one of those critical efforts of nature, by which inveterate and perilous diseases are instantly thrown off, and the health of the body politic at once renewed.

But the friends of civil liberty, disappointed as they are, in the anticipation of its immediate establishment throughout Europe, still indulge the idea that the way is constantly preparing for it, and that it will yet be enjoyed as universally, though not as soon as they once predicted. They have in general, however, lost a little of their enthusiasm, and no longer esteem the subversion of a despotism as equivalent to the creation of a free government, nor hail the adoption of a democratic constitution, as a complete security of the rights of the people ; for they have seen that the forms of such a constitution may be made a cloak for the most oppressive tyranny. Their hopes are now founded on improvements in the character and condition of the mass of the community. Forms of government indeed are not indifferent. Influenced by the character of the people, they have in turn an influence upon

it. All classes of society find a strong motive to improvement in the persuasion that they hold a political power in the state ; and by the very exertion of such a power they become better qualified for its exercise. Yet there is danger in either extreme. When an ignorant and thoughtless populace suddenly assume the reins of government, no sooner has the short intoxication, which follows the acquisition of sovereignty, passed away, than feeling the difficulties and embarrassments of their situation, they relinquish to the first hand bold enough to grasp it, a power, which they know not how to wield, and sink into hopeless despotism. It is not without a miracle that a nation can be born in a day. We are continually learning therefore to look with less and less interest, upon violent and precipitate revolutions in the frame of government. They are means indeed, but not the only nor always the most efficient means, of improving the political condition of a state. Such a blow as the French Revolution may at that time have been useful to rouse the inhabitants of Europe from the lethargy, in which they had so long been slumbering, to some sense of their power and their rights ; but we are persuaded that in the peaceful days since the fall of Napoleon, many noiseless but important changes have taken place on the European continent, in the condition, institutions, habits, and opinions of men, which will produce more lasting and greater effects than that unnatural and tragical drama.

To this period the work before us is confined. The author points out the alterations recently made in the forms of government among the nations of Europe, and the causes, which are directly and conspicuously operating to bring about still further modifications of their present political systems. Observing that the spirit of political improvement now at work throughout the world, is the necessary and natural result of the progress of civilization, that is of industry, wealth, and knowledge, in which the whole body of society is interested, he states, that ‘ the property and intelligence of society at large are, in a general view of the subject, enlisted every where in its support.’

‘ If then we regard the whole of Europe as forming one body politic, divided into parties in regard to the great question of political reformation now so violently agitated, there will be found on one side the whole mass of population, not interested in the support of existing institutions injurious to the public welfare ;

and on the other the individuals deriving personal benefit from these institutions, with all that part of the population, which is under their influence.

‘Such are the present circumstances of Europe, that the forces enlisted on opposite sides by these contending interests are nearly balanced ; and they are separated pretty exactly by a geographical line. In all the Western part of Europe, civilization and political improvement in its train, have already made such progress that they have in a great measure broken down, in substance, if not in form, all injurious institutions : and here there is really no interest of any consequence engaged in support of such establishments or opposed to the cause of liberal principles and good government. The Eastern part of Europe on the contrary is yet in a great measure uncivilized. Russia, the dominant power in that quarter, as a nation, is wholly so. There, the existing institutions are all the growth of barbarous times, accommodated to barbarous manners, and wholly at variance with the habits and feelings of civilized nations. Still a certain portion of the society derives a vast individual importance from their existence, and would probably oppose with vigor any attempt to overthrow them. Independently of which, the nations themselves are not yet sufficiently improved to meditate such attempts or to wish for change. But though at present entirely safe from any attack at home, the rulers naturally look with jealousy upon the progress of different principles in other contiguous countries. When they see a spirit adverse to their importance passing like an electric shock from nation to nation, they begin to apprehend with reason that if not checked in time, it will soon penetrate into their own quarters and attack the foundation of their power and wealth. It is therefore on general principles a natural and necessary though an unfortunate result of their position, that they employ their influence and even their arms to prevent in foreign countries the most salutary and useful innovations. And in these enterprises they carry with them the whole weight of the communities they respectively govern, which, in their present state of civilization, are nothing more than blind instruments in the hands of their rulers. They also find assistance abroad, in all that portion of society in the West of Europe, which is connected with the mouldering remnants of abuses which have been destroyed in substance ; in that part which has personally suffered by political improvements and still retains a lingering hope, that the ancient state of things will be completely restored. Along the geographical line which divides these adverse interests lies the debateable ground, where at present they come to open physical collision. In the whole of Italy and in the western part of Germany, civilization has risen to as high a point as in any part of Europe ; but the Eastern des-

pots avail themselves of their proximity and of the circumstances which now neutralize in a great measure the active power of the Western nations, to maintain the ascendancy of antiquated forms and establishments inconsistent with civilization, by their great influence, and when occasion requires at the point of the bayonet; as we have seen in the kingdoms of Sardinia and Naples.'

Hence he deduces the general conclusion, that 'the cause of political improvement is identical with that of civilization and general prosperity, so that every measure, that has a tendency to produce these effects, whatever may be the views, with which it is taken, tends also to the promotion of liberal institutions;' and also the converse of the same proposition, that 'no effectual measures can be taken to oppose the progress of liberal ideas, except such as strike at the root of the general prosperity of a country in all its branches; and prohibit or discourage agriculture, commerce, and manufactures.' He adds, that 'even the violent measures taken by sovereigns to check the progress of constitutional principles—the late invasion of Italy—indeed the whole series of wars directed against the principles of the French revolution or its abuses—while they temporarily crushed or checked these principles in one form, have added in another an immense accession to their strength, by the vast creation of public debt, which operates to a very great extent, if not to its full nominal amount, as a transfer or cession of property from the landed proprietors to the industrious and mercantile classes;' and finally remarks, that 'the ultimate issue of the present struggle will depend upon the future progress of civilization.'

'If civilization, instead of advancing any farther, should decline from its present state, and go to decay in the countries where it has now attained its greatest height, the advance of liberal political principles will stop with it; and instead of spreading into other parts of Europe, where they have not yet penetrated, their influence will gradually disappear from the regions which they now in greater or less degrees enlighten. If, on the contrary, as every thing seems to indicate, commerce, manufactures and agriculture—though perhaps laboring at this moment under a temporary depression—are likely for a long and indefinite future period to advance by regularly and rapidly increasing steps, in consequence of the great increase of population, which must necessarily take place in the European settlements all over the globe, and the consequent great augmentation of demand for the

products of labor in all its forms—then it may be safely asserted, that the cause of good government and liberty is also in an advancing state, that it will continue to gain ground in those parts of Europe and the world, where its triumph is yet only partial ; and will even gradually penetrate into regions, whose population is now unanimously arrayed against it, or is too barbarous even to form an idea of the existence of such a blessing.’

After this introduction, he enters into an examination, in detail, of the situation of the principal European powers, which is by far the ablest and most interesting part of his work, and to which we shall presently recur ; and then gives a sketch of the political system of Europe, considered as a single community. Notwithstanding the independence of the several states, their geographical position and intimate relations render them, in substance, one vast and irregular body politic ; but as they do not acknowledge any common tribunal for the settlement of their conflicting claims, none of them have any other means of redressing their real or supposed wrongs, than an appeal to arms, and hence perpetual war is the basis of their international system. Comparing it with that of our own country, founded on the basis of perpetual peace, and establishing over several different states, independent of each other as to all internal regulations, one general government, for the adjustment of their conflicting interests, and the administration of their common concerns, we are struck with the inestimable superiority of our institutions, and earnestly sympathize in the wish expressed by the author for a similar union of all the nations of Europe ; though we cannot accede to the sentiment, which he seems in the warmth of his zeal to have adopted, that any consolidation of those nations, in whatever manner and at whatever expense it may be brought about, must promote their happiness ; nor regard the assertion, which he advances with apparent seriousness, that it would be a blessing to them, if they had been united, even by universal and lasting submission to papal power, or should become so by common subjection to the Russian yoke, as any thing but a paradox.

The coalitions, which have sometimes been very naturally entered into by several of the European states, to defend each other against the attacks of a dangerous neighbor, whose power was too great to be resisted by either of them singly, are considered by this writer as an approach to the great object of consolidation, and he thinks that the general congress of ambassadors,

which has been repeatedly resorted to for settling the pretensions of the several European states at the conclusion of peace, might have been changed without much difficulty into a permanent tribunal, had not the gigantic power of Russia come within the pale of European policy ; a power, which all the rest of the continent combined would, in his opinion, be unable to resist, as he thinks to be sufficiently proved by the repulse and ruin of Napoleon.

If the nations in the West of Europe would regard their subjugation by Russia as a misfortune, he holds that it was and still is their true policy to promote the aggrandizement of France, and to unite with her in opposing the Eastern colossus.

‘ The war of western independence is still, as I have said, to be fought ; and until it has been actually fought and decided in favor of Russia, there will be room for hope and a chance of success for the other powers ; because, if we even suppose their materials of resistance to be in themselves wholly inadequate, they have still in their favor the possibility of some fortunate occurrence of an accidental character. Accidents, however, being, as such, beyond the reach of anticipation, it is only upon an estimate of the existing materials of resistance, as they will probably be employed, that any calculation can be formed upon the subject ; and the chance of success for the western powers, founded upon any such calculations, appears at present to be extremely small.’

He maintains, however, that the military occupation of the whole of Europe by Russian troops would not check, but promote the progress of civilization and political improvement.

‘ The prominent feature in the immediate future prospects of Europe, if the anticipations in which I have indulged in a preceding chapter are correct, is the probable prevalence of the influence and arms of Russia over the western nations. It remains, therefore, to inquire what will be the effect of this event, should it happen, upon the state of civilization and the establishment of a general government.

‘ If the Russian influence in the west of Europe were decidedly unfavorable to the progress of civilization, it would check in the same degree the tendency towards a political union resulting from this progress. And as the mass of the Russian people is now in a very uncivilized state, it may appear, at first view, as if this would in fact be the consequence. But farther reflection may perhaps lead to a different opinion. The prevalence of the Russian power is not the prevalence of the rude barbarians, that con-

stitute the bulk of the nation, but of the dominant class of proprietors, which is equally civilized with the same class in any other part of Europe. Their political influence, as far as it affects the body of society, would be exerted in the same direction, and produce the same consequences, as that of the authorities now existing. It will doubtless be, for a considerable period of time to come, the immediate interest of this class in Russia, to check the development of civilization, in one of its particular forms, viz. that of liberal political institutions. Their whole exertions are now employed for this purpose; and it is under this pretext, as I have observed, that they will gradually extend their political and military power over other countries. But this effort, in reality, counteracts itself; and the persecution of liberal ideas only increases the ardor, with which they are embraced and propagated. This temporary pressure will therefore serve to prepare the way, at some future period, for violent explosions in favor of liberty. Meanwhile, the Russian influence counteracts, in another way, its own efforts in favor of arbitrary principles, by the strong encouragement which is given to the development of civilization, in every other branch, except the modification of political forms. The Russian nobles, who are doubtless the wealthiest proprietors in Europe, are also among the most active and munificent patrons of industry. In their private and social habits, as individuals, they unite the gorgeous magnificence of Asia with the fine taste of the western world, and encourage, by consumption of their products, the luxurious and elegant arts, more than perhaps any other class of persons whatever.

This is a very novel and ingenious theory, but it is in our opinion essentially incorrect, and rendered plausible only by the singular ability, with which it is maintained. The assumption, on which it rests, is too broad and unqualified, and when restricted to its just limits, is insufficient to support the system. It is undoubtedly true that political improvement is one of the objects, though not the only one to be effected by the progress of civilization, but we cannot admit that it is its necessary result. Still less can we assent to the sweeping conclusion that the progress of political improvement is identical with that of civilization and general prosperity, and promoted by every measure which tends to produce them. Improvements in the theory and practice of government are indeed of themselves advances in civilization, but not the only advances, nor always proportioned to the progress of the physical and exact sciences, of literature, or of the elegant and useful arts. If the cultivation of these be included, as it commonly is, within

the term civilization, then the assertion of our author cannot be maintained; if by civilization he would denote the progress of political science alone, then it is only an identical proposition and justifies none of the conclusions drawn from it. The progress of liberal institutions of government is not the same as that of civilization in its general sense, nor would the experience either of ancient or modern times warrant the assertion that they are necessarily simultaneous. The periods which have been marked out by the common consent of mankind as the golden ages of literature and refinement on the continent of Europe, that of Augustus, that of Leo, and that of Louis XIV, were not those, in which their countries were most free; and the nations, which have enjoyed the highest degree of political liberty, have not always, at the same time, been the most civilized. Let France, at the period last mentioned, be compared with Switzerland; or let the reader of Tacitus place the manners and institutions of the Germans in contrast with those of Rome. That liberty is favorable to civilization and civilization to liberty is readily admitted, but it is quite a different position from the unqualified assertion, that their progress is identical.

This is not a solitary error. Its consequences flow through the whole argument. Relinquish it, and it can no longer be maintained, that every attempt made by despotic sovereigns to check the progress of constitutional principles and to increase their own power must of course defeat itself, that liberal political principles will necessarily advance or decline with commerce, agriculture, and manufactures, or that if Russia should subdue all Europe, the encouragement, which would be given to the luxurious and elegant arts by the Eastern magnificence and gorgeous taste of her nobles would establish good government and liberty throughout the world. The same error seems to have led the author to the opinion above alluded to, that the diminution of the papal power, which protestants have hitherto united in regarding as the great source of civil and intellectual freedom in modern times, was in truth an evil; and that the consolidation of Europe, even under the gloomy sceptre of superstition, would have promoted the cause of liberal institutions and human happiness. Assuming,—in our opinion a bold assumption,—that such a consolidation, by abolishing wars, would have encouraged peaceful industry, and promoted the cultivation of the arts of convenience and luxu-

ry, he seems at once to conclude, in conformity with the erroneous position above noticed, that it would therefore have established liberal principles and sound institutions of government. But not so. 'Had the clergy prevailed, Europe,' to use the words of the writer himself, 'would have taken the form of a great ecclesiastical state, like the empire of the Mahometan Caliphs, and that of Japan during a long period of its history.' And it would have been as likely to resemble them in substance as in form. Have they been the regions of intellectual and political liberty? The science of government is founded, like most others, on experiment. It is by observing innumerable attempts and failures, and by investigating their causes, that it has been at length advanced to its present state of excellence. If Europe had been subjected to a single government, these numerous attempts could never have been made; and without the aid of experience, philosophers might have speculated forever, yet been unable to plan and construct the vast and beautiful fabric, under which it is our happiness to live, which is rendered secure at once by its massiveness and its symmetry; and which leaves room for all the emulation and enterprise naturally resulting from the distinct existence of the several states, while it prevents the contests that would arise among them, if they were entirely disconnected.

It cannot be pretended, that the very case supposed, of a common submission by all the European nations to the power of the church, would of itself have created a government like ours. That alone would not constitute such a government. It is further requisite that there should be a proper delegation and distribution of authority, and above all that institutions should exist, which give the people a constant control over the exercise of the power they delegate, and teach them to use with intelligence and discretion that which they retain. The clergy, we are told, did at one period possess the authority, the continuance of which would have been so happy for mankind. 'For every purpose but that of mere form, they succeeded in obtaining and holding the general government of Europe for two or three centuries:—time enough one would think for an experiment. Yet in point of fact, was this period distinguished by the successful cultivation of the arts of peace, by moral, intellectual, and political improvement; or was it disturbed by perpetual tumults, darkened and degraded by su-

perstitution, and polluted with blood? It seems to us that the papal power must have been, as it proved, too weak to hold the nations of Europe in a lasting union, or have entirely destroyed their independence, and crushed and amalgamated them into one common mass of brutal ignorance.

The author seems to us not only to overrate the advantages to be expected from the mere fact of a consolidation of Europe, however produced, but to be mistaken in supposing that it will speedily take place. He certainly exaggerates the force of Russia, when he pronounces it to be superior to that of all the other European states combined. In the elements of power, in numbers, wealth, skill, and industry, she does not surpass them all; and as to her uniform success, we know no very splendid trophy won by her single arm from the southern nations of Europe, since the days of Souvaroff. She reaped no laurels at Austerlitz, or Friedland; the retreat of Napoleon from her capital, and the disasters attending it were owing to the unusual severity of the season, rather than to the arms of his enemies; and in the following year, if she had been left after the battle of Bautzen, to fight out the quarrel alone, it cannot be doubted, that the terms of a humiliating peace would have been dictated to her for the third time from the lips of the same conqueror. She is powerful indeed; at this time the most powerful state on the continent, and it is by no means the true policy of the others to encourage her growth; but she is not yet a counterpoise for them all. It is true, that, from the despotic nature of her government, she moves in a single body with concentrated force; but should she attempt to realize the dream of universal dominion, she would soon find, what Europe has repeatedly felt, that common danger is as strong a bond as despotism.

We believe that the spirit of political improvement is now active, that more rapid progress is making in the science of government, than in any other, so that it advances faster than civilization in general; and of course we cannot admit their progress to be identical; yet we trust that the political reformation of the present age will be to future generations, as the religious reformation, which three centuries since broke the papal yoke, has been to us, the spring of great improvements in every department of civilization. We are not insensible that an union of all the states of Europe upon just principles, and with a proper distribution of power and suffi-

cient checks on its exercise, would be an inestimable blessing; but are incredulous, when it is asserted that such an union would be the effect of their consolidation by the arms of Russia, or that this is a probable event. This scheme seems to us far less feasible and efficient, than the celebrated project of Henry IV of France for the accomplishment of the same object. The reign of Napoleon has given us a specimen of the advantages to be expected from a military consolidation of Europe.

But though these opinions and the conjectures founded on them occupy the beginning and the end of the work now under consideration, they are not essential to it, and serve no other purpose than to give it an air of unity and compactness. They constitute only the frame of the picture, which the author has drawn with a master's hand, of the present political condition of the several nations of Europe. This, which forms the principal part of the book, is distinguished throughout by just and profound views, elevated sentiments, and a manly eloquence.

France occupies the first place. The immense political importance of her new laws, regulating the distribution of property, is duly appreciated and fully displayed; and the strange reasoning and idle fears of the Edinburgh reviewers and of Mr Malthus in relation to the effects of those laws are most happily refuted and exposed. The jealous and vacillating conduct of the royal family is ably contrasted with the frank and simple policy, which would have equally promoted their interest and their honor. An entertaining account is also given of the successive changes in the structure of the government, and in the state of public opinion, and a sketch of the literary character of the most eminent writers on political subjects. The author closes this very engaging and instructing chapter with the following remarks: 'The political constitution of France is sound and vigorous in its essential parts beyond that of any other nation in Europe. The outward appearance exhibits morbid symptoms, at first view, of a serious and alarming character, but which, examined more nearly, can hardly be regarded as dangerous, and must soon vanish under the restoring influence of an active vital influence within.'

The next chapter, relating to Spain and Portugal, though interesting, does not exhibit the same minute information, and,

as a whole, is much less satisfactory. The following passage is, in our judgment, founded on an entire misapprehension of the subject, to which it relates.

‘ The establishment of the Cortes in the form of a single assembly is regarded by many of the friends of liberty as a very unfortunate arrangement. But this objection, founded in a great measure on an erroneous theory of the British constitution, has, in my opinion, very little weight. It supposes that the existence of a nominal aristocracy is a point of great importance. But even admitting the correctness of this idea, which might however be contested on various grounds, it may be asked with pertinence, whether the security of such an aristocracy depends upon their being shut up in a separate room to deliberate on the public affairs; whether, like ciphers in notation, they are personally insignificant, and only acquire importance by their local position; whether their political weight does not depend, on the contrary, upon their property; whether, as long as they retain their property, they will not also retain their influence; and whether to form a part of the *same* legislative assembly is not the most favorable position, in which they can be placed for exercising the influence their property gives them, while they retain it, over their supposed enemies.’

Undoubtedly they might equally exercise their *influence*, whether they were in the same or a different assembly, or even without constituting any part of the legislature. But the question is not about their influence, but their constitutional authority. It is not their sitting in a different room, as is pleasantly rather than aptly suggested, but their right of putting a *veto* on the proceedings of the popular branch of the government, of preventing the operation of any of its acts, simply by refusing their assent, and without the trouble of exercising any influence or persuasion whatever, in which the power of the British house of lords and of every similar body consists; and this would be lost, if they were rendered a part of the assembly now controlled by them, and allowed to vote in it only in proportion to their number; for in that case, laws might pass without their consent, which is now impossible. So far is this from being immaterial, that it is an immense power, and one which can have no lawful origin but the will of the people. We see nothing absurd, however, in their establishing two legislative assemblies with this mutual control. This is a check, not upon the people, but on each of these assemblies. It must be recollected, that the representatives of the people are not

in any case the people themselves, but only their agents ; and in the case now supposed, both assemblies are such agents, and the inability of either to perform any valid act, without the concurrence of the other, is a restraint, not on the authority which the people retain and exercise, but on that which they delegate ; on the power of these assemblies to make laws binding their constituents.

We cannot refrain from presenting to our readers the following extract from this chapter. It is a beautiful passage, and full of practical wisdom.

‘The most interesting aspect, under which the Spanish and Portuguese revolutions present themselves to the citizens of the United States, I may say indeed to the world at large, is that, under which they are considered as affecting the condition of the American colonies. No doubt can be entertained, that the complete emancipation of these vast regions will be effected at no great distance of time ; and the simultaneous erection of these hitherto insignificant settlements into eight or ten independent and powerful nations may well be considered as one of the most extraordinary and interesting events that ever occurred. It can hardly fail, when its consequences shall be fully developed, to give an entirely new face to the political and commercial affairs of the world.

‘The struggle for independence in the Spanish colonies has been precipitated by the convulsions in the mother country, and is not, like our revolution, a spontaneous effort, resulting from an internal consciousness of capacity for self-government. This is the most unfavorable circumstance attending it. It is this cause which draws out the contest into such a weary length, and which, after the formal emancipation shall be effected, may very probably entail upon these countries a long period of anarchy and discord. A spontaneous effort for freedom implies a maturity of intellectual and physical resources sufficient to secure the object with ease, and to improve it to the best advantage. A colony, thus emancipated, is like a ripe fruit, that drops from its parent tree at the moment of full maturity, and springs up naturally into a new and vigorous plant. The freedom of South America is a premature birth. It does not proceed from the healthy action of nature, operating within at the proper time, but has been forced upon the colonies by accidents occurring abroad. Considered as a rebellion against the Spanish government, it is just, if any enterprise ever deserved that qualification ; and would have been, at whatever period it might have happened. No society was probably ever subject to a more intolerable and revolting system of misgovern-

ment; and it is impossible to deny the right of resistance under such circumstances, without denying completely the inherent and universal right of self-defence against injustice and oppression. But, considered as a measure intended to promote the happiness of the South Americans, the revolution presents itself in a less favorable point of view, and might probably have been delayed with great advantage for two or three centuries. The Americans, however, are not to bear the blame for this precipitation. They have been subjected to the action of political forces, over which they had no control. A revolution, however premature, was the necessary result of the circumstances, in which they were placed; and, although its aspect may for some time present many features not very consonant with just notions of liberty, still the friends of humanity must wish for their success, and are bound by all suitable means to promote it.

‘The policy which may be adopted by the Spanish government in regard to their colonies is still uncertain; and in the period of trouble and confusion, that may very probably occur at home, the possessions abroad must be left in a great measure to themselves. At present, the plans under consideration contemplate the establishment of constitutional governments, nominally subject to Spain, and administered on the spot by princes of the royal family. If the mother country had the power to enforce this arrangement, it might perhaps be as favorable to the ultimate well being of the colonies, as their immediate emancipation. But this is not the case; and after struggling, as they have done, for independence for ten or twelve years, it can hardly be expected that they will abandon the prize of their own accord, at the very moment of success. It is therefore much to be wished for the interest of humanity, of the colonies, and of Spain herself, that she may abstain from any further wanton waste of resources and life, and submit with a good grace to the decree of necessity. She will probably find, as England did, the emancipation of her colonies infinitely more profitable to her, than their possession; and, in exchange for the vain name of ruling the Indies, will find the wealth of the Indies pouring in to her territory in fertilizing streams, instead of merely rolling through it, as it now does, like a mountain torrent, and leaving no marks of its passage, but barrenness and desolation.’

The author then gives a melancholy, but just idea of the degraded state of Italy and Greece, and expresses an honest indignation at the mean and oppressive policy observed by the principal powers towards these nations—the intellectual parents of Europe. The following chapter offers an elaborate view of the recent political revolutions and present condition of

Germany, including Austria and Prussia, and contains more important and minute information on the subject, than any other work we have seen. But we must be contented with recommending it to our readers. The remarks contained in that part of the work professedly devoted to Russia are confined to the personal character of the emperor, and though in the main just, appear to us too severe. The account of the continent is completed by a few brief remarks on the situation of Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands, and on the principal peculiarities of their inhabitants.

Our author then turns to Great Britain, and very properly taking it for granted, that the most important facts relating to its present condition are known to his readers, enters upon a train of reflections in illustration of them, which he evidently delights to pursue, and in which, though he is somewhat desultory, it is delightful to follow him. His remarks on the present state of the British constitution lead him to conclude, 'that it still exists, both in form and substance, in its ancient purity ; and that if the mass of the people no longer enjoy, in the same degree as they did formerly, the blessing of practical liberty, it is owing to other circumstances, and not to an alteration of the political institutions.' He then gives an account of the several political parties existing in England, which concludes with the following beautiful sketch of the characters of the three great statesmen, who adorned the close of the last century, and whose names will long shed lustre on their country and their age.

'Fox and Burke, if I may be allowed to dwell a little longer on so pleasing a theme as the characters of these illustrious statesmen, were not less distinguished for amiable personal qualities and intellectual accomplishments, than for commanding eloquence and skill in political science. The friends of Fox dwell, with enthusiasm and fond regret, upon the cordiality of his manners and the unalloyed sweetness of his disposition. It is unfortunate, that the pure lustre of these charming virtues was not graced by a sufficient regard to the dictates of private morality. Burke, on the contrary, with an equally kind and social spirit, was a model of perfection in all the relations of domestic life ; his character being at once unsullied by the least stain of excess, and exempt from any shade of *rigorism* or defect of humor. While his private virtues made the happiness of his family and friends, his conversation was the charm and wonder of the loftiest minds and the most enlightened circles of society. He was the only man, whom

Dr Johnson, a great master of conversation, admitted to be capable of tasking his powers. The only deduction from the uniform excellence of Burke is said to have been the small attraction of his manner in public speaking, a point in which Fox was also not particularly successful, but was reckoned his superior. It would be too rash for an ordinary observer to undertake to give to either of these two mighty minds the palm of original superiority. It can hardly be denied, however, that that of Burke was better disciplined and more accomplished; and his intellectual reputation, being better supported than that of Fox by written memorials, will probably stand higher with posterity. Had Fox been permitted to finish the historical work, which he had begun, he might perhaps have bequeathed to future ages a literary monument, superior in dignity and lasting value to any thing that remains from the pen of Burke. Both possessed a fine and cultivated taste for the beauties of art and nature; that of Fox seems to have been even more poetical than his illustrious rival's; but he has left no written proofs of it equal to the fine philosophical essay on the sublime and beautiful. It is but poor praise of this elegant performance to say, that it is infinitely superior to the essay of Longinus on the sublime, from which the hint seems to have been taken, and which nothing but a blind and ignorant admiration of antiquity could have ever exalted into a work of great merit.

‘A sagacious critic has advanced the opinion, that the merit of Burke was almost wholly literary; but I confess I see but little ground for this assertion, if literary excellence is here understood in any other sense, than as an immediate result of the highest intellectual and moral endowments. Such compositions, as the writings of Burke, suppose, no doubt, the fine taste, the command of language, and the finished education, which are also supposed by every description of literary success. But in the present state of society these qualities are far from being uncommon; and are possessed by thousands, who make no pretension to the eminence of Burke, in the same degree in which they were by him. Such a writer as Cumberland, for example, who stands infinitely below Burke on the scale of intellect, may yet be regarded as his equal or superior in purely literary accomplishments, taken in this exclusive sense. The style of Burke is undoubtedly one of the most splendid forms, in which the English language has ever been exhibited. It displays the happy and difficult union of all the richness and magnificence, that good taste admits, with a perfectly easy construction. In Burke, we see the manly movement of a well bred gentleman; in Johnson, an equally profound and vigorous thinker, the measured march of a grenadier. We forgive the great moralist his stiff and cumbrous phrases, in return for the rich stores of thought and poetry, which they conceal: but we ad-

mire in Burke, as in a fine antique statue, the grace, with which the large flowing robe adapts itself to the majestic dignity of the person. But, with all his literary excellence, the peculiar merits of this great man were, perhaps, the faculty of profound and philosophical thought, and the moral courage, which led him to disregard personal inconvenience in the expression of his sentiments. Deep thought is the informing soul, that every where sustains and inspires the imposing grandeur of his eloquence. Even in the essay on the sublime and beautiful, the only work of pure literature, which he attempted, that is, the only one, which was not an immediate expression of his views on important public affairs, there is still the same richness of thought, the same basis of 'divine philosophy,' to support the harmonious superstructure of the language. And the moral courage, which formed so remarkable a feature in his character, contributed not less essentially to his literary success. It seems to be a law of nature, that the highest degree of eloquence demands the union of the noblest qualities of character, as well as intellect. To think is the highest exercise of the mind; to say what you think, the boldest effort of moral courage; and both these things are required for a really powerful writer. Eloquence, without thought, is a mere parade of words; and no man can express with spirit and vigor any thoughts but his own. This was the secret of the eloquence of Rousseau, which is not without a certain analogy in its forms to that of Burke. The principal of the Jesuits' college one day inquired of him by what art he had been able to write so well; "*I said what I thought,*" replied the unceremonious Genevan; conveying in these few words the bitterest satire on the system of the Jesuits, and the best explanation of his own.

'If, by the criticism above alluded to, it be meant that Burke, though an eloquent writer and profound thinker, was not an able practical statesman, the position may be more tenable, at least for the partisans of the school of Fox, but not perhaps ultimately more secure. To form correct conclusions in points of practice, in opposition to the habitual current of one's opinions and prejudices, must be considered the highest proof of practical ability; and this was done by Burke in regard to the French revolution. As a member of the opposition and an uniform friend and supporter of liberal principles, he was led by all his habits of thinking, and by all his personal associations, to approve it; and to feel the same excessive desire to introduce its principles in England, which prevailed among his political friends. But he had sagacity enough to see the true interest of his country, through the cloud of illusions and associations; and independence enough to proclaim his opinions, with the sacrifice of all his intimate connexions. This was at once the height of practical ability and disinterested pa-

triotism. If he pushed his ideas to exaggeration in regard to foreign affairs, it was still the exaggeration of a system essentially correct in its domestic operation. He was rather a British than a European statesman; but the moment was so critical at home, that he may perhaps be excused for not seeing quite clearly what was right abroad; and it was also not unnatural that he should carry to excess the system, to which he had sacrificed his prejudices and his friendships. That his system was not correct in all its parts may be easily admitted; but I think that in supporting it under the circumstances, he proved great practical ability; and what system was ever adopted, in which it was not possible, thirty years after, to point out faults?

By the side of these celebrated patriots arose another not less distinguished, though his name is hardly surrounded in public opinion with so many amiable and lofty associations; I mean the son of Chatham—‘the pilot that weathered the storm.’ Prejudice itself can scarcely refuse to this statesman the praise of transcendent endowments, both intellectual and moral. He had the natural gift of a brilliant and easy elocution, great aptitude for despatch of business, and a singular facility in seeing through at a glance and developing with perfect clearness the most intricate combinations of politics and finance. He possessed, moreover, a firmness of purpose and a determined confidence in his own system, which finally insured it success, and which afford, perhaps, the strongest proofs he has given of the elevation of his character. It was no secondary statesman who could trust undauntedly to himself, when left as it were alone in Europe, like the tragical Medea, abandoned by all the world; and in the confidence of his own resources, could renew his efforts with redoubled vigor. His admirers will hardly venture to ascribe to him the enlarged philosophy or the warmth of heart that belonged to his illustrious colleagues and rivals. The conduct of public affairs was the business of his life; and he neither knew nor cared any thing about other matters. He was born and bred to this; and if he was equal to it, he was also not above it. Philosophy and friendship were to him, in the language of the law, *surplusage*; as Calvinism was to the great Cujas—*Nil hoc ad edictum Praetoris*. And although political affairs are of a higher order, and of more extensive interest than any others, yet, when the conduct of them is pursued mechanically, like a mere professional employment, it becomes, like other professions, a matter of *routine* and drudgery. Thus, while Burke and Fox appear like beings of a different class, descending from superior regions to interest themselves in the welfare of mortals, Pitt presents himself to the mind as the first of mere politicians, but still as a mere politician like the rest. His eloquence is marked with the stamp of his character. It pursues a clear

and rapid course, neither falling below nor rising above the elevation of his habitual themes. No attempt to sound the depths of thought, or soar on the wings of fancy, still less to touch the fine chords of feeling, but all *a + b*, an elegant solution of political problems very nearly in the manner of algebra. This profuse and interminable flow of words is not in itself either a rare or remarkable endowment. It is wholly a thing of habit, and is exercised by every village lawyer, with various degrees of power and grace. Lord Londonderry, though he wants the elegant correctness of language, as well as the lofty talents of his great predecessor, commands an equally ready and copious elocution. In the estimate of Mr Pitt's powers, I have not taken into account the errors of his foreign policy, because an erroneous judgment is not always a proof of inferior talents, but often only argues a false position. The misfortune of having countenanced and joined in the crusade against the French, and the merit of having resisted the spirit of revolution at home, belong alike to Pitt and to Burke. The praise of a clearer and more generous view of foreign politics is due to Fox; though his plan was not always bottomed on the most enlarged system of European relations, and although his glory is somewhat clouded by his too precipitate zeal for political novelties at home.'

The distress, which is universally admitted to pervade England, is his next topic. He ascribes it to the fact that property is now so unequally distributed that the nation is laboring at once under the extremes of wealth and poverty, and expresses little expectation that any complete practical remedy can be applied to this evil. In connexion with this subject we find a description of the general appearance of the country.

'But whatever may be the extent of the distress in England, or the difficulty of finding any remedies for it, which shall be at once practicable and sufficient, it is certain, that the symptoms of decline have not yet displayed themselves on the surface; and no country in Europe at the present day, probably none that ever flourished at any preceding period of ancient or of modern times, ever exhibited so strongly the outward marks of general industry, wealth, and prosperity. The misery that exists, whatever it may be, retires from public view; and the traveller sees no traces of it, except in the beggars, which are not more numerous, than they are on the continent, in the courts of justice, and in the newspapers. On the contrary, the impressions he receives from the objects, that meet his view, are almost uniformly agreeable. He is pleased with the great attention paid to his personal accommoda-

tion, as a traveller, with the excellent roads, and the convenience of the public carriages and inns. The country every where exhibits the appearance of high cultivation, or else of wild and picturesque beauty ; and even the unimproved lands are disposed with taste and skill, so as to embellish the landscape very highly, if they do not contribute, as they might, to the substantial comfort of the people. From every eminence, extensive parks and grounds, spreading far and wide over hill and vale, interspersed with dark woods and variegated with bright waters, unroll themselves before the eye, like enchanted gardens. And while the elegant constructions of the modern proprietors fill the mind with images of ease and luxury, the mouldering ruins, that remain from former ages, of the castles and churches of their feudal ancestors, increase the interest of the picture by contrast, and associate with it poetical and affecting recollections of other times and manners. Every village seems to be the chosen residence of industry, and her handmaids, neatness and comfort ; and in the various parts of the island, her operations present themselves under the most amusing and agreeable variety of forms. Sometimes her votaries are mounting to the skies in manufactories of innumerable stories in height, and sometimes diving in mines into the bowels of the earth, or dragging up drowned treasures from the bottom of the sea. At one time, the ornamented grounds of a wealthy proprietor seem to realize the fabled Elysium ; and again, as you pass in the evening through some village engaged in the iron manufacture, where a thousand forges are feeding at once their dark red fires, and clouding the air with their volumes of smoke, you might think yourself for a moment a little too near some drearier residence. The aspect of the cities is as various, as that of the country. Oxford, in the silent, solemn grandeur of its numerous collegiate palaces, with their massy stone walls and vast interior quadrangles, seems like the deserted capital of some departed race of giants. This is the splendid sepulchre, where science, like the Roman Tarpeia, lies buried under the weight of gold, that rewarded her ancient services, and where copious libations of the richest port and madeira are daily poured out to her memory. At Liverpool, on the contrary, all is bustle, brick, and business. Every thing breathes of modern times, every body is occupied with the concerns of the present moment, excepting one elegant scholar, who unites a singular resemblance to the Roman face and dignified person of our Washington, with the magnificent spirit and intellectual accomplishments of his own Italian hero. At every change in the landscape, you fall upon monuments of some new race of men among the number, that have in their turn inhabited these islands. The mysterious monument of Stonehenge, standing remote and alone upon a bare and bound-

less heath, as much unconnected with the events of past ages, as it is with the uses of the present, carries you back beyond all historical records into the obscurity of a wholly unknown period. Perhaps the Druids raised it; but by what machinery could these half barbarians have wrought and moved such immense masses of rock? By what fatality is it, that in every part of the globe the most durable impressions, that have been made upon its surface, were the work of races now entirely extinct? Who were the builders of the pyramids and the massy monuments of Egypt and India? Who constructed the Cyclopean walls of Italy and Greece, or elevated the innumerable and inexplicable mounds, which are seen in every part of Europe, Asia, and America; or the ancient forts upon the Ohio, on whose ruins the third growth of trees is now more than four hundred years old? All these constructions have existed, through the whole period within the memory of man, and will continue when all the architecture of the present generation, with its high civilization and improved machinery, shall have crumbled into dust. Stonehenge will remain unchanged, when the banks of the Thames shall be as bare, as Salisbury heath. But the Romans had something of the spirit of these primitive builders, and they left every where distinct traces of their passage. Half the castles in Great Britain were founded, according to tradition, by Julius Cæsar; and abundant vestiges remain throughout the island of their walls and forts and military roads. Most of their castles have however been built upon and augmented at a later period, and belong with more propriety to the brilliant epoch of the Gothic architecture. Thus the keep of Warwick dates from the time of Cæsar, while the castle itself, with its lofty battlements, extensive walls, and large enclosures, bears witness to the age, when every Norman chief was a military despot within his own barony. To this period appertain the principal part of the magnificent Gothic monuments, castles, cathedrals, abbeys, priories, and churches, in various stages of preservation and of ruin; some, like Warwick and Alnwick castles, like Salisbury cathedral and Westminster abbey, in all their original perfection; others, like Kenilworth and Canterbury, little more than a rude mass of earth and rubbish; and others, again, in the intermediate stages of decay, borrowing a sort of charm from their very ruin, and putting on their dark green robes of ivy to conceal the ravages of time, as if the luxuriant bounty of nature were purposely throwing a veil over the frailty and feebleness of art. What a beautiful and brilliant vision was this Gothic architecture, shining out, as it did, from the deepest darkness of feudal barbarism! And here, again, by what fatality has it happened, that the moderns, with all their civilization and improved taste, have been as utterly unsuccessful in re-

valling the divine simplicity of the Greeks, as the rude grandeur of the Cyclopeans and ancient Egyptians? Since the revival of art in Europe, the builders have confined themselves wholly to a graceless and unsuccessful imitation of ancient models. Strange that the only new architectural conception of any value, subsequent to the time of Phidias, should have been struck out at the worst period of society, that has since occurred. Sometimes, the moderns, in their laborious poverty of invention, heap up small materials in large masses, and think that St Peter's or St Paul's will be as much more sublime than the Parthenon, as they are larger; at others, they condescend to a servile imitation of the wild and native graces of the Gothic; as the Chinese, in their stupid ignorance of perspective, can still copy line by line, and point by point, a European picture. But the Norman castles and churches, with all their richness and sublimity, fell with the power of their owners at the rise of the commonwealth. The independents were levellers of substance, as well as form; and the material traces they left of their existence are the ruins of what their predecessors had built. They too had an architecture, but it was not in wood nor stone. It was enough for them to lay the foundation of the nobler fabric of civil liberty. The effects of the only change in society, that has since occurred, are seen in the cultivated fields, the populous and thriving cities, the busy ports, and the general prosperous appearance of the country.'

The chapter on the balance of power bears the traces of an enlightend and comprehensive mind, but rests too much on the idea, that the force of Russia is irresistible, to receive our entire assent. There is also a chapter on the Naval power of England, the principal object of which is to expose the difference existing between the rules of naval and military warfare, in regard to the seizure of private property.

'The acknowledged basis of the law of nations is the great and universal law of nature; and is it to be endured, that this sacred oracle shall be made to say one thing here and another two or three miles off, so it be upon a different element? What says the illustrious Roman orator of this very law of nature in the well known fragment of the Republic? *Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit.* Such were the lights upon this subject nearly two thousand years ago of one whom we dignify with the titles of pagan and heathen; and with all our christianity and civilization, we have since brought the law of nations to such a point of pefection and consistency, that it shall pronounce the same act in the same place to be highway rob-

bery at low tide, and fair war at full sea. One would think the civilians must be lunatic themselves to make an action change its character from right to wrong four times in every twenty-four hours, without any other change of circumstances than the ebb and flow of the tide in the place where it was committed; yet such, according to the present law of nations, is literally the fact. The plunder of private property belonging to enemies by an armed force on a beach would be against the law of nations, and generally punishable with death; while the same act, performed by a ship of war at the same place when covered with water at high tide, would be agreeable to usage and public law. While we are going back to antiquity in search of authorities on the law of nature and nations, would it not be as well for the honor of common sense, if not of humanity, to pass over the age of the crusades, when the nameless, I had almost said shameless compilations, so often appealed to in maritime courts, were collected, and ascend to the time of Cicero?

This is rather a severe attack upon the poor civilians, and seems to take it for granted that they make the law of nations, whereas in truth, all they can do, is to expound it as it exists. From the acknowledged fact, that this law is founded on reason, it has sometimes been hastily concluded, that every thing reasonable in the abstract is part of the law of nations; and nothing unreasonable. Now this sweeping conclusion by no means follows from the premises, and would lead to most pernicious consequences in practice. For since there is no common tribunal to decide what is reasonable among nations, every one must be the judge for itself, and would of course do whatever it should think reasonable, and submit to nothing which it should think unreasonable, under all the circumstances of each particular case. This would at once abolish all law, and introduce perpetual wars; since no two parties in interest could ever be expected to agree. Reason is indeed of universal obligation; the same in every region and in every age; but its particular deductions are as various as the situations of those, by whom they are drawn. Were there no other rule than this, though we should nominally have one uniform law, the decision of every case would vary perpetually with the feelings, interests, and prejudices of the individuals who administered it, and these would be a much more uncertain standard even than the changes of the moon and tide. Reason itself teaches us the necessity of some more precise rule for the regulation of human conduct.

The law of nations is founded on the law of nature, but is not therefore exactly coextensive with it. Every state is bound by its treaties, by the usages established among those nations, with which it is associated, and by reason or the law of nature. But each of these rules is to be applied only to cases not determined by the preceding ; the more vague must yield to that which is more certain and definite ; reason must be controlled by custom, and both by the letter of a treaty. Such, too, is the doctrine and the practice of all municipal tribunals. They appeal in the first place to the letter of the law ; if there be no statute, then to established precedents ; and if these be wanting, to reason and analogy. The idea that, because the law of nations is founded on reason, every question arising under it must be decided by mere reasoning, independent of precedent, reminds us of a case in lord Coke's reports. ' A controversy of land between parties was heard by the king and sentence given, which was repealed, for this, that it did belong to the common law : then the king said, that he thought the law was founded upon reason, and that he and others had reason, as well as the judges : to which it was answered by me, that true it was, that God had endowed his majesty with excellent science, and great endowments of nature ; but his majesty was not learned in the laws of his realm of England, and causes which concern the life, or inheritance, or goods, or fortunes of his subjects, are not to be decided by natural reason, but by the artificial reason and judgment of the law, which law is an art, which requires long study and experience before that a man can attain to the cognizance of it.'

The universal prevalence of a custom is sufficient evidence that according to the common sentiment of mankind, it is reasonable ; and it is not for one individual or one nation to control all others by denying it. Or admitting such custom to have been ever so unreasonable in its origin, while it prevails, it is the law ; and there is no solecism in asserting that it is reasonable it should be so. Reciprocity is the corner stone of the law of nations. It is just that a sovereign should submit to what he is accustomed, under the same circumstances, to do ; and right for a state to treat others, as it is uniformly treated by them. But how then, it will be asked, can the general law of nations be amended ? As it was created, by custom. A nation may attempt to alter it at any time by waving the exercise of its strict rights in a particular case ;

and if this example be generally imitated, the old usage becomes obsolete, and a new one having the force of law is at length established. Thus it is, that public law has been ameliorated in modern times, and the very inconsistency, of which the author complains, been introduced. Anciently, all private property was fair plunder, both by sea and land; but while the rule of naval warfare remains unaltered, that of military warfare has been rendered more humane by a change of custom, which has been brought about, not by the reasonings of civilians on the abstract principles of the law of nature, but by general convenience. It was natural that such a change should first take place on land, because it was more important, inasmuch as it is more desirable that men's dwellings should be secure than their ships; and because it was more easily accomplished, inasmuch as sovereigns, by preventing their troops from plundering the inhabitants of conquered territories, are better able to levy taxes and contributions on them for their own benefit. It is to be hoped that the same rule will in time be established on the ocean; and when it is so, it will be remembered to the honor of the United States and of Prussia, that they first attempted to introduce it by inserting it in a formal treaty. The circumstance, however, that when they renewed the other provisions of that treaty fourteen years afterwards, in 1799, this was suffered to expire, is some evidence that their attempt was premature.

We readily admit also, what this writer repeatedly suggests, that the custom of deciding national disputes by war is as absurd, as the ancient practice of determining private controversies by judicial combat; yet it would be little less than quixotism for a practical statesman to make its immediate abolition the great object of his labors, and something more for any judicial tribunal to declare that, because it is irrational and cruel, it is therefore contrary to the law of nations, and punish every exercise of belligerent power as robbery or murder. An enlightened government ought to seize every opportunity of mitigating the rigor of public law, but should not forget that by declaring itself the advocate of extravagant and hopeless schemes of benevolence, it diminishes its ability to promote such as are practicable. Distinguished writers may usefully go further in their speculations, and endeavor to render public opinion familiar with still bolder improvements; yet there is a limit, which even they cannot overstep, without being regarded as visionary, and losing something of their influence.

The conduct of Great Britain, in her foreign relations, bears no marks, it is truly said, of a liberal and enlightened policy. Such a spirit did not dictate the celebrated rule of the war of 1756, which is supported by no practice but her own; nor her monstrous claim to the right of declaring a whole continent under blockade, or to that of taking from neutral ships at sea persons not in the military service of her enemies, and of exercising on the high way of nations a mere municipal authority. The position, however, taken in this work, that it was an unwarrantable pretension of England, to hold that enemy's property on board of neutral vessels is good prize, cannot be maintained. This is the settled law of nations and is uniformly enforced by the United States themselves. A pamphlet has been recently published here to refute the assertions of this writer that the United States acquiesced in the rule of 1756, and sanctioned in a formal treaty the attempt of England to starve the whole innocent population of another country, by totally interdicting the trade in provisions. We know of no acquiescence by the United States in the rule of 1756; but on the contrary they always protested against it, and compensation was demanded and received from the British government under the treaty of 1794, for the American vessels which had been captured and condemned by virtue of this rule. With regard to the trade in provisions, the words of the treaty are these: 'And whereas the difficulty of agreeing on the precise cases, in which alone provisions and other articles not generally contraband may be regarded as such, renders it expedient to provide against the inconveniencies and misunderstandings, which might thence arise: it is further agreed, that whenever any such articles, so *becoming contraband according to the existing law of nations*, shall for that reason be seized, the same shall not be confiscated; but the owners thereof shall be speedily and completely indemnified; and the captors or in their default the government, under whose authority they act, shall pay to the masters or owners of such vessels the full value of all such articles with a reasonable mercantile profit thereon, together with the freight and also the demurrage incident to such detention.'

We supposed that there was now but one opinion among enlightened men with regard to the merits of the treaty containing this provision, and that at the present day it was admitted as a whole to have been equally honorable and bene-

ficial to our country. It is obvious that the clause above cited does not warrant the reproach cast on it, that it did not recognize any new rule of public law, nor sanction any usurpation on the part of Great Britain, or relinquish any national right of the United States. Literally construed and fairly applied, it is unexceptionable, tending rather to mitigate than increase the severity of the law of nations; and the only rational objection to its policy is, that in practice it admitted, and indeed almost invited abuse, by enabling England, more easily and with less danger of clamorous and immediate resistance to interrupt even our lawful commerce with her enemy, upon her paying what her own courts should deem an adequate compensation for the injury.

The work, we are now reviewing, has been mentioned in some English publications as that of a pretended American. Our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic will not believe, that America can really have produced a book, written in a manner worthy of the best days of their literature. The style is throughout in excellent taste. Brilliant and glowing without any affectation either of quaintness or of novelty; polished, chaste, and vigorous, yet entirely unostentatious, and wearing no appearance of effort; it attracts attention always to the subject of which it treats, and not to its own merits. We will not say, that a minute criticism might not here and there discover in it a few instances of carelessness and inelegance; but in the main, it is just what a style should be; perfectly simple, and elegant in its simplicity; transparent and without tinge itself, like the pure light of heaven, yet giving distinctness, coloring, and beauty to every thing that it touches. We hope for the honor of our country that such a pen will never be weary.

ART. X.—*Bracebridge Hall, or the Humorists, a Medley, by Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* 2 vols. New York, 1822.

WE should be without excuse either to the public or our own consciences, did we longer neglect the pleasing duty of noticing the productions of our distinguished countryman, Mr Crayon. It is true we have all along consoled ourselves with the reflection that he needed not our commemoration; that far more widely than our pages circulate at home, his own were diffused and admired, and that while we can scarce